

QUESTIONS RECEIVED PRIOR TO THE BIDDERS' CONFERENCE

- 1 The conversion process you refer to briefly below. Is there a legacy solution that created some of the images for conversion or are you primarily referring to fiche and film?
A There is no legacy solution. There are currently no images. VRS is looking to have their entire member folder contents (paper) scanned to image and to microfilm.
- 2 Does the State of Vermont participate in "Cooperative Purchasing" provided by GSA?
A Yes, but such participation requires special approval procedures involving the Commissioner of Purchasing and Contracts Administration.
- 3 Is this project was related to the automated mainframe-based retirement infrastructure with a modern and full-featured client server system?
A Our next RFP will be for the acquisition of an automated retirement system (LOB). The RFP to which you are responding is for conversion of paper to images, indexing, creation of microfilm, and an interim imaging system for use until the line-of-business (LOB) is installed.
- 4 Do you have any issues doing business with corporations located outside the state of Vermont?
A No, but the scanning must be done on-site as specified in the RFP – see Section 1.3.
- 5 Is it possible to get a Microsoft Word Version of the RFP?
A Yes, it has been posted to the web.
- 6 The requirements for the proposed conversion and imaging system are very detailed. Did you receive help from any third party consultant, Imaging Solutions Provider and/or Imaging Conversion Services Company? If so, who?
A VRS engaged L R Wechsler, Ltd. (LRWL) to assist in requirements gathering, developing the RFP, and assisting with procurement. LRWL is NOT a provider of imaging solutions or conversion services.
- 7 If successful, is it possible to have the Interim Imaging System become with new LOB Pension Solution or have your procured a different system already?
A We have not yet issued the RFP for the LOB Pension Solution (which is to include integrated imaging and workflow). That procurement will include the long-term imaging solution.

8 The proposal requires on-site image conversion. If the processes and prices were sufficient, would you consider off-site conversion services?

A *No. The RFP specifies on site only.*

9 Would indexing occur at the folder level or individual page level?

A *The indexing would occur as specified in the RFP at the document level. For the most part, documents are single page.*

10 For proper pricing, would it be possible to get some sample pages to run through our production process?

A *No. However, you can see samples at the Bidders' Conference.*

11 The RFP states that you would like the selected vendor to index by document form # (provided by you), member SSN, member name, and member DOB. That is a total of 4 index values per document. Please confirm our understanding.

A *Please refer to Section 3.3.3 of the RFP in which we specify a total of 13 index fields.*

12 Is a database of file available to extract additional index information? For example, a system that already contains SSN, Name and DOB. If we index by SSN, can we extract/validate from the third party system to populate the remaining fields (e.g. Name and DOB)?

A *Please refer to the last paragraph of Section 1.4 in which VRS commits to make available specific information extracted from the current system.*

13 Are the project milestones concrete? Since the conversion will occur at your facility, are vendors responsible for completing the project by the milestone dates when circumstances out of their control occur?

A *The project milestones are our best current targets for the time required. Obviously if circumstances occur which are out of the successful bidder's control, milestone dates can be adjusted appropriately. Tell us in your proposal if the dates should be extended or contracted, with the constraint that all backfile imaging must be completed by August 26th, 2005.*

14 Is an ASP hosted imaging solution a possible alternative to the Interim Document Imaging System?

A *No*

15 Who is going to review responses for selection of vendor?

P. 44

A *The responses will be reviewed by a team made up of VRS staff and management personnel assisted by LRWL.*

- 16 There are two methodologies for handling film: P. 8
(1) 16mm microfilm as described in the RFP
(2) updated microfiche with all images for a Unique Member imaged to Computer Output Microfiche upon creation or update provide an eye readable file.

Is there a preference or objection to either solution?

A *Microfilm is required.*

- 17 Please elaborate on the filming requirements? (e.g. 100' or 215' rolls, reduction ration, indexing parameters, blipped vs Unblipped, Bipping Guidelines (if blipped is preferred) as compared to index criteria

A *Given the relatively low volumes of documents, it would seem that 100' rolls would provide optimum turnaround. Our hope is that we would never have to access the actual film, but that when we do, the roll and frame indices would get us to the proper location readily. Thus we have no opinion on blipping, though it would appear to ease the automatic finding of the correct frame. Should you have suggestions for improvement of our requirements, please make them part of your proposal.*

- 18 300 dpi is great, but why? P. 7

A *State standards for the storage of images mandates 300 dpi.*

- 19 How many square feet will be available to the contractor? P. 8

A *470 square feet of conditioned space in two contiguous rooms*

- 20 It may be necessary for significantly more than 3 resources p. 8
to complete this project on schedule. For example: using best case throughput of 1000 prep pages / hour, it would require a staff of five to prep these documents and two to scan these documents within the allocated schedule. Will VRS make additional space available and/or will the space be available 24/7?

A *VRS is open to discussion about the project schedule (and thus the number of staff) with the constraint that all backfile imaging must be completed by August 26, 2005. The premises will be available 24x7*

- 21 What is the estimated volume of carbon copies? P. 18

A *We have included the carbon copies number under "onion skin" in Table 4 on page 20. We estimate the total volume to be less than 1%*

22 Can the conversion order be modified? It appears that the beginning of phase 2 may fall within the “no access” window for teacher folders as defined on p.10. p. 19

A Yes, the conversion order can be modified to fit the most appropriate project schedule once the contract is signed.

23 What is the VRS definition of “document” as referenced in Table 4? p.20

A We believe that 98% of the documents are single-page pieces of paper. The remaining 2% are multi-page, double-sided, or both. In rare occasions, a document may contain four (4) image pages.

24 How will trailing files be handled or is that part of the .5% that are not contained in the database? p.22

A Please explain ‘trailing’ files.

25 How will capture be handled after Phase 2 is completed?

A As we state in the RFP, day-forward scanning will start at the same time as the backfile conversion starts. Once backfile conversion is complete, capture will continue in the same way until the LOB imaging system is installed.

26 Is machine readable threshold density acceptable for eliminating blank pages? p.26

A See Section 3.3.11. The elimination of blank pages is one of the criteria in determination of acceptable quality.

27 How can a purge process be defined when VRS can’t define what is to be purged? p.33

A At this time VRS does not expect to purge any records.

28 Concerning the required media, which will become the property of VRS Why does this provision make sense? If the vendor selected intends to utilize a high capacity scanner to facilitate processing the backfile in a timely manner, while your future day forward requirements may only necessitate a mid volume scanner. Please elaborate on your expectations for this provision. p.7

A VRS requires that the converted images be placed on CD rather than electronically transmitted following indexing for several reasons. 1) we expect the CDs to offer us some level of control of the inflow of indexed images; 2) should the interim imaging system fail in some way even before the first backup occurs or should there be a malfunction in the system and the images have to be reloaded, or some other similar unexpected problem occur we will have a backup which we can use for that purpose; and 3) our expectation is that the production of film copies may require us to send

copies of the images to a third party for that purpose – the CDs permit that without having to burn new CDs.

Keep in mind that there are two simultaneous processes (backfile and day-forward). Our assumption is that there will be at least two scanners in operation from the beginning.

Should the bidder have an alternative suggestion for each of the above, please supply those suggestions in your response.

- 29 May the selected vendor subcontract the generation of microfilm? P. 8
May the vendor FTP or transport the images and indices via CD or DVD to a subcontractor or another vendor owned location for Generation of the microfilm?

A *Yes, you may subcontract the generation of microfilm. Transfer of images over the web is acceptable as long as the transmission is secure.*

- 30 It is my understanding that the project manager must be involved including attendance of the mandatory bidders meeting? p.13

A *Yes.*

- 31 The performance bond should be in the amount of the vendors Bid? p.15

A *No, in the amount of the face value of the contract. For the purposes of estimating the costs of the project, you may use the amount of the vendor's bid to determine the cost of the performance bond.*

- 32 Should the vendor provide, its written explanation, certification or other appropriate proof that its images cannot be altered with its RFP response? p. 17

A *Yes.*

- 33 It seems apparent there are twelve (12) folder types. How are the sub-folders arranged within each folder type? Can your electronic data base be queried by folder types, sub Folder types? p. 20

A *There are currently no sub-folders within the individual folders. Documents are arranged by date of receipt/creation/filing. VRS has no electronic database which allows us to query by folder and/or sub-folder type.*

- 34 How resolute is the VRS in subdivision of document types within the backfile? (Currently all documents within a Folder can be obtained by paging through the folder, we assume there is no sub foldering within a folder currently. Potentially, the most expense portion of this indexing will be to sub divide by document type. (this could be handled by multi-page tiffs) or alternatively it seems that during the life of this EDMS (Electronic Document Management System) that p. 21

document classification could be added by VRS staff when that folder was accessed by VRS staff in the future)

A VRS is open to suggestions that will make us more productive than what we have currently proposed. However, the state standard does not permit multi-page tif files. And while we recognize that “typing” documents will be the most expensive part of the conversion, we do not want to spend our very limited staff time on document indexing.

35 It is our understanding that you have an electronic database that will allow p.25 population of most of the indices. Would you expand our understanding of your database capabilities for population of index fields, QC checks and provide an exact field layout as it exists.

A VRS had planned on producing an extract from our database(s) in comma-delimited or some other form mutually agreed upon with the successful bidder. We do not currently have a single database which we can reference for this information.

36 You indicate in paragraph 4 that some documents have color. P.28
Are you requiring color scanning at 300 dpi? Are you mandating color scanning for all documents to assure color capture for those rare color images?

A We assume that the color documents will be scanned on a separate scanner from the production scanner used for bi-tonal scanning. If the color documents are photographs they do not need to be scanned at 300 dpi. Text documents which contain colored ink need not be scanned in color. Text documents which contain images of photographs will need to be scanned at 300 dpi to capture the text as required by state guidelines.

37 Does the VRS have a position in regards to the cost of purging? P.33
(e.g. the training for purge criteria and the searching for matching of that criteria may be more expensive than the process of scanning of all pages)

A We do not currently expect to purge any files or documents

38 Vendor is to provide a D&B report. Which one? They have many and the p.39 costs vary according to detail.

A We asked for a D&B number – not a report.

39 What are the hours access will be made available to the selected vendor?

A Access will be 24 x 7.

40 Will the selected vendor have access during weekends?

A Yes.

41 Page 7 of 54 indicates space for three members of bidders staff will be provided – is this intended for the staff involved in backfile conversion?

A Yes.

42 Are image files to be single- or multi-image TIFFs?

A Single-page TIFF.

43 What is the approximate percentage of 8.5 X 11-inch and 8.5 X 14-inch documents within the backfile population?

A We estimate that 10% of the documents are smaller than 8½” x 11”, 88% are 8½” x 11” and the remaining 2% are 8½” x 14” or larger.

44 Is the requirement of a browser-based application software mandatory or will a GUI environment be acceptable (refer to page 7)?

A A browser-based client is preferred but not a mandatory requirement.

45 Are stated accuracy rates for data on the record, field or character level?

A Our intent is to obtain a highly accurate conversion. If one index is incorrect, the conversion of that page is incorrect. If the image is illegible but the original was legible, the conversion of that page is incorrect.

46 Will turnover of microfilm and its associated index be required at the same time as electronic records and indices (i.e. within 5 days)?

A No. We require delivery (and VRS QA) of the microfilm of images converted in Stage I prior to commencing Stage II. Subsequent microfilm must be delivered within thirty days of completion of Stage II; however, we would encourage submission of full rolls as they are completed.

47 There appears to be two different services requested: Professional Services (creation of methodology approach document, written procedures manual of all manual processes, etc.); and Image Conversion Services (document preparation, scanning, image QC, etc.) (Section 1.4). However, the State is requesting that all services be aggregated into a price per image (Cost Summary Sheet). Is this correct?

A That is correct.

48 Will the State provide workstations for the 4 QA personnel and 15 day-forward seats (with selected vendor ONLY providing image file server, scanner, scanning application, browsing application, and unassisted backup hardware/software)?

A As stated in the RFP, depending on the vendor's hardware specifications for appropriate QA and day-forward seats, VRS will supply those workstations.

Otherwise your parenthetical statement is correct, though we would remind you that you must also produce microfilm of the scanned images.

49 If so, what are the workstation specifications (operating system, memory, hard disk size, etc.)?

A The VRS workstations currently run either Windows 2000 or Windows XP Professional. They range in speed between 1.8 and 3.4 GHz, they have 40 GB hard-drives, and they all have 17" monitors.

50 Attachment D – Network Diagram, appears to indicate the attachment of the backfile conversion and interim imaging system to VRS' network. Is this correct?

A We will attach the interim imaging system to the network so that VRS staff members can access the converted images. You may attach the backfile conversion system to the network.

51 If so, what is the network operating system used by VRS?

A VRS's current network operating system is Windows 2003.

52 Assuming that the imaging platform and associated software for the temporary imaging system has the required functionality and scalability to meet the needs of the long-term LOB imaging solution, is there any possibility that the temporary imaging system could be utilized for the permanent retirement system?

A It is the prerogative of the successful bidder to pursue that opportunity with the LOB vendor.

53 Are we correct in assuming that all documents related to a person are in a single Folder?

A Yes.

54 How many VRS users will need access to the Imaged documents in the interim phase?

A 15 members of staff plus up to four QA operators.

55 Page 7 of the proposal states "VRS requires that converted images be in TIFF 6.0 (an industry standard format) and compressed using CCITT, Group 4, 2D." Is the requirement that the converted images are stored in the Interim imaging system in Tiff 6.0 format or that the images are available to the final imaging system in Tiff 6.0 format?

A The former. State standards for the storage of images are that they be in single-page TIFF 6.0 and if compressed, done so with CCITT, Group 4, 2D.

56 Are the microfilms to be purchased by VRS or is it to be included in our cost?

A *Microfilm for the backfile conversion project is to be included in the vendor's cost. Day forward microfilm will be purchased by VRS.*

57 Does VRS expect the vendor to support the Final LOB implementation? If so, for how long?

A *VRS does not expect the successful backfile vendor to support the LOB application. However, we do expect cooperation and support during the conversion (Interim to LOB) process. See Section 3.3.7.*

58 Are the different document collections (i.e., Active Teacher, Active municipal, active state, etc.) truly separated?

A *Yes.*

59 Are physical sheets of paper within these folders currently organized into documents? If "Yes", what is the average number of ...

Physical sheets in each folder: _____

Physical sheets in each document: _____

Documents in each folder: _____

A *There is no formal organization (other than chronological order) within the folders. Occasional documents are stapled together. Some applications are double-sided, multi-page, folded documents which will have to be separated for scanning purposes. Use the numbers in Table 3 to compute averages.*

60 Is the Member ID a unique and is there a Dbase of member ID available? Does this Dbase that contains member ID also contain SSN, Last Name, DOB ,Plan Name ?

A *The Member ID will be unique across all the members in the system. There is no single database which contains all the required information for all members. However, VRS is prepared to work with the successful bidder to create an appropriate extract file.*

61 Please explain the State Statute; "must link electronic image to human-readable image by state statute"

A *The state requires that, if VRS converts its human-readable paper to electronic images stored in an electronic imaging system, there must be a paper, micro-film, or micro-fiche backup to the electronic image and that backup must be human-readable. VRS does not plan to retain the paper, so we are left with micro-film or micro-fiche as our alternatives; we have opted to use micro-film.*

62 Please describe the location of the State Treasurer's office in Montpelier? Adequate contiguous space with power, AC, furniture, and access to facilities will be required.

Is space with these characteristics available for use to perform this conversion? Is it located in the same building in which the backfile is stored? When can there be access to the site, # hours per day and # days per week.

A *We have asked bidder's to tell us what space, furniture and facilities they require. We believe we can provide the necessary space and accessibility.*

63 What are your requirements for file access during the conversion?

A *See "Location and retrieval of file folders for work in process" on page 33 of the RFP. When a file is required, VRS shall require it within 24 hours and shall require the entire, complete file.*

64 How many files will you need access on average each day?

A *No more than one or two per week, if that.*

65 Will you usually need the whole file or just individual documents?

A *We would want the entire file.*

66 Will the bid be shared with any third party consultants out side of the State Of Vermont infrastructure?

A *Any response to the RFP is, by law, a public document and as such can be accessed upon written request subsequent to bid award. Proprietary information should be so marked; see Section 5.*

67 What are the hours of operation for the facility where the imaging activities are anticipated to take place?

A *The vendor will be permitted 24 x 7 access to the facility.*

68 What is the anticipated approval time from submission of the 10% conversion plans (work plan, day forward strategy, etc.)?

A *VRS commits to a five-day turn-around period with comments and an additional two days for approval of the amended plans.*

69 Are the color sheets required to be scanned in color?

A *Color photographs, if present, should be scanned in color. Colored pages and pages with colored text can be scanned in bi-tonal – if the image quality is sufficient.*

70 If vendor responds to this RFP, are they excluded in any way from responding to the next RFP re: LOB Pension Solution?

A *No.*

71 When do you anticipate the next RFP to be out?

A *We anticipate the LOB RFP being available late spring or early summer.*

72 Can you describe in a more detailed description, the requirements of the LOB Pension Solution?

A *Not at this time. An RFP for the system is forthcoming.*

73 What are the expected annual volumes of documents that need to be captured, scanned, and indexed, after the implementation of the new LOB Pension Solution?

A *See the next to the last paragraph in section 3.1 of the RFP – approximately 600 pages per week.*

74 Is vendor expected to provide day forward conversions during the 18 month interim period? If so, please confirm the expected volumes mentioned in the RFP of 600 documents per week.

A *As stated in the RFP, we expect to transition the responsibility for scanning of day-forward paper to VRS personnel early in the process. So there will be some support required.*

75 **General:** Does the State have funds appropriated for each stage of this project, and if so, what is the level of funding for each?

A *Sufficient funding has been appropriated or is expected to be appropriated in future years.*

76 **General:** Is funding a consideration for VRS to determine whether to proceed from Stage I to Stage II or terminate the effort at the end of the 10% backfile completion pilot phase?

A *No, satisfactory vendor performance is.*

77 **General:** Does VRS anticipate restricting bidders on the new Line-of-Business (LOB) pension solution Request for Proposal based on participation in the Retirement Backfile Conversion Service contract award?

A *No.*

78 **General:** Is VRS open to alternative hosting options?

A *No.*

79 **General:** It appears that VRS has identified a preferred vendor for the day forward LOB; will you identify for purposes of obtaining standards to work towards for final

LOB product? Based on the statement on page 52 is there still an opportunity to define the future retrieval system?

A *VRS has not identified a preferred vendor for the LOB solution. As noted in the RFP, Appendix C is provided as a sample of the level of detail to be produced by the successful bidder. It is included for illustrative purposes only.*

80 Section 1.3, page 7 of 54: Second bullet states that VRS will provide space for three members of (successful) bidder's staff. Please provide estimate of total square footage available to successful bidder for placement of equipment and staff to accomplish Stages I and II within time specified in **Project Schedule, 1.5**, and clarify if space for three members is maximum available.

A *The space VRS has identified for this project is described in the answer to Question 19.*

81 Section 1.3, page 8 of 54: Fourth bullet states that VRS requires 99.5% index accuracy, and cites "double key entry of SSN" as example. Section 3.3.3 states that SSN could be auto-assigned through table lookup. Please also confirm that VRS requirement is 99.5% accuracy for SSN, not 100%, and that SSN can be auto-assigned.

A *We cite double-key entry of the SSN as an example; we believe that our database extract file will permit auto-assignment – if the vendor chooses to take advantage of the capability. VRS confirms that we are seeking overall 99.5% accuracy on document indexing.*

82 Section 1.5, Project Schedule and 5.5, Bidder Proposal - Cost: The Project Schedule does not have firm completion date, yet there are contract payment holdback requirements. We request that VRS request bidders to enumerate price escalations or other cost considerations in their Cost Proposal for consistent cost evaluation should the LOB implementation extend beyond 1/1/2007.

A *We expect the vendors to provide firm completion dates and any other information they feel appropriate. If additional information is required of vendors, VRS will obtain it during evaluations.*

83 Section 2.4, Performance Bond: Please incorporate provision for release of performance bond in the event of VRS contract termination at the end of Stage I, due to lack of funding, or for convenience of VRS at any time during contract term.

A *For vendors to whom this is an issue, we suggest that such language be submitted in the proposal.*

84 Section 2.8, Contract Payments/Holdbacks: Please clarify the schedule for payment of the holdback amounts for each Stage. It appears that VRS intends to hold back 15% of both Stage I and Stage II, and not release the 15% holdback from

each Stage until the LOB system is in place, estimated at 16-18 months after the completion of the backfile conversion, and up to six months after the completion of the project (**3.3.11, Processes, page 28 of 54**). Does VRS expect bidder to carry this as a receivable for up to 18 months? This provision will serve to increase costs to VRS. Is this negotiable?

A *Yes we do want to retain the holdback until the images are in the LOB. No it is not negotiable.*

85 Section 2.8, Contract Payments/Holdbacks: What costs will VRS reimburse bidder should VRS elect not to continue project during or after Phase 1?

A *See Section 2.8*

86 Section 3.1, Background and Envisioned Overall Project Approach: VRS is potentially allowing a mechanism for images/indexes to go offsite for creation of microfilm and indexing. Will VRS also allow the QA and interim LOB image query/access/retrieval system to reside outside the VRS facility, provided that the secure, remote server meets all other requirements for the interim LOB system, subject to VRS security assessment (as required in **Section 3.3.9**)?

A *No. See response to #14 above.*

87 Section 6: Section specifies that Cost proposals comprise 25% of the evaluation point structure. Please clarify whether compliance with RFP instructions is pass/fail and 75% of the evaluated scoring will be applied to only “complete and compliant” proposals.

A *The bidder is expected to respond with due diligence by providing the requested information in the designated manner. Bidders failing to respond to this RFP as prescribed will place themselves at a comparative disadvantage or will be subject to disqualification at the discretion of VRS.*

88 Clarification - VRS has indicated that it will guarantee 1 million pages for conversion; yet VRS has requested that the bidder use 1.8 million for all pricing. This clearly is a conflict, as all costs of bidder will be inflated to cover the costs of the full 1.8 million while only being guaranteed 1 million. Can VRS elaborate on the rational for this?

A *We have counted sample file drawers and sample folders to arrive at our estimate of pages which need to be scanned. The 1.8 million image figure is an estimate (and we feel is a good estimate). We ask all vendors to provide price quotations against that estimate. However, we will guarantee that there are at least 1,000,000 pages to be imaged.*

QUESTIONS ASKED AT THE BIDDERS' CONFERENCE

89 Is there to be any file de-preparation?

A No, except that if more than one or two separator pages are applied per member folder, the separator pages must be removed prior to return of the files.

90 Can the separator sheets be left in?

A Yes, as long as they do not measurably increase the size of the member folder. By this we mean that leaving one or two separator sheets is acceptable; leaving three or more is not.

91 Are there Post-it notes and what should we do with them?

A There are few (if any) Post-it notes in the folders. They should be removed and discarded as part of the document preparation step.

92 Do we need to tape cut sheets to a single page prior to scanning?

A Our intent is to obtain the best-quality, lowest price conversion possible. Should the vendor have a solution which keeps the image count low while decreasing document preparation time, he or she should include that proposal in their response. Please describe in your proposal how you will deal with the cut sheets.

93 If you are retrieving an entire file, why do we need document-level indexing?

A We believe this question is out of context (see Question 65). VRS requires retrieval of the entire file in the context of file-access during the conversion.

94 What is the reasoning or rationale behind not allowing an ASP solution?

A VRS does not desire such a solution.

95 How many users will be on the system?

A 15; refer to the RFP.

96 Should documents stapled together be indexed as more than one document?

A This leads to the bigger question of the indexing of pages of burst- and otherwise multi-page documents. Since the State standard calls for single-page TIFF, we want all multi-page documents, even documents which are stapled together, to be indexed as individual documents.

97 Are there requirements for virus control when connected to the state LAN?

A *There are. The state policy can be found at http://www.dii.state.vt.us/Home/irmac_policy.html.*

98 What is required for facilities and accommodations? Will all three rooms be available to the vendor?

A *All three rooms will be available if necessary. VRS would like the vendor to specify what space, office furniture, power, etc., is required for their operation in your proposal.*

99 Will the hallway be available for storage of documents?

A *No.*

100 How many document types do we have?

A *We have identified approximately 150 document types which will be assigned during indexing to one of 30 documents names. Some of the names are individual documents; some are versions of individual documents; some are collection buckets. See Section 3.3.4 of the RFP, paying special attention to the discussion of multiple versions of single documents.*

101 Are there groups of documents within a folder that can be categorized as a single document? Are the documents in chronological order?

A *Folder contents need to be scanned in the order in which they appear in the folder, and that order needs to be maintained when returned to the folder. Typically, this is chronological order. See question 96 above.*

102 Is there a breakdown of the number of document types by folder?

A *No, there is not.*

103 Would you please confirm the color scanning?

A *The only documents that need to be color scanned (24-bit pixel depth) are the color photographs. However, note that documents on colored paper need to be scanned such that they are legible. Retaining the color of the colored-paper document itself is neither important nor required.*

104 Do you want black and white photo's scanned in color or on a bi-tonal scanner?

A *Black and white photos (if there are any) are to be scanned in gray scale. VRS believes that 8-bit pixel depth is sufficient for the scanning of black and white photographs. VRS further notes that CCITT, Group 4, compression is appropriate for bi-tonal images but not for color. We require that the vendor use a standard,*

lossless compression technique (such as LZW) to compress color and grayscale images.

105 How do indexed files get passed back? How does microfilm get passed back? Is there an index file format?

A VRS is looking to the successful bidder to tell us what process they will use to return images and the accompanying index files. We also look to the bidder to explain their process for updating the index fields pertaining to microfilm roll and frame number, not just for the backfile conversion, but also for day-forward scanning.

106 Are we providing web connectivity in the workrooms?

A Yes, web connectivity will be provided through GovNet. The successful bidder will have to provide a security plan which meets with State of Vermont approval.

107 If internet access is not provided, can they provide their own DSL into the building?

A Internet access will be provided, see answer to question 106.

108 Is there a state required reduction ratio for micro-filming or are there state standards?

A The State standards for microfilming are laid out at the following web-site: <http://www.bgs.state.vt.us/qsc/pubrec/micro/index.html>. We note that the standards include such things as the type of film (including both base and emulsion), suggested reduction ratio of 40:1, etc.

109 Are there any specs at all for the microfilm?

A See answer to 108, above.

110 How do we delineate documents within the folder when there is no apparent or obvious break in the string of documents (e.g., a 3 page document that is not stapled together)?

A Multi-page documents are delineated by staples, paperclips or as multi-page (e.g., 11"x17") documents which will need to be burst. Given our requirement for single-page TIFF, there is no requirement for the creation of multi-page image documents.

111 Can we separate (burst) the 11"x17" documents into the component 8½" x 11" documents?

A Yes. The vendor has permission to burst any unburst media.

112 How do we need to handle the files that are out of the drawer? Will they be remedied before scanning?

A If a folder is out of the drawer (so indicated by a pasteboard "File Out" insert), someone in the organization is working with the file. The vendor will not need to track these separately as "Out of Order" folders. However, the vendor's procedures must provide for the scanning and indexing of all folders, including those which are out of the drawers at the time that a cabinet is removed for scanning (possibly by providing a box into which all "File Out" folders are returned).

113 How many fan-fold sheets are there in the files?

A See the RFP for specific quantities. There are relatively few fanfold sheets in the files.

114 Is there as certain amount of time we expect the project manager to be on site?

A Yes, no less than two days per week.

115 Will there be a photocopier available?

A No; vendors should provide their own.

116 Confirm that we are requesting per image pricing?

A Yes, pricing is per image in each of the phases.

117 Would we consider just the scanning and not the document typing?

A No, we require that all scanned documents be indexed according to the specifications laid out in the RFP.

118 Would it be possible for us to get a business process diagram to see how the image will be retrieved?

A We will make available upon request a copy of VRS process definitions which was developed last year.

119 Can you specify that the interim imaging solution be used as the imaging piece of the ultimate LOB solution?

A VRS does not want to limit the range of LOB suppliers who might possibly respond. Therefore we have specified the standards which the converted images must meet as well as the use of a standard database for the image indices. We will specify in the next RFP that the LOB vendor must provide the capability of importing images and indices from the interim system – and we will define the interim solution's storage scheme as the environment from which they must convert/import the indexes and images.

120 Will the import interface be designed before the imaging project starts?

A *No. We will specify that the LOB must be a solution that can take this information and move it into its own system – indices and images. We will provide the details of the interim solution so they can support the conversion/migration/import.*

121 Please discuss your motivation for not releasing the holdback until the LOB solution goes on-line?

A *Our motivation is to not be left with scanned data that does not successfully load into our LOB.*

122 Will we consider reducing the size of the holdback?

A *No.*

123 Will the VRS pay a finance charge or carrying charge on the holdback?

A *No.*

124 Will VRS want to search on all 13 components of the index?

A *The indices which need to be searchable during the life of the interim imaging solution are: Unique Member ID, SSN, Last Name, DOB, Document Name, Form Number and a new index called Virtual staple (see below). During indexing, we want to be able to use the Last Name and DOB to help resolve ambiguous assignment of a document to a member; and we want to present the contents of a member folder sorted by scan date/time.*

125 Will we consider modifying the characteristics and requirements of the pilot project?

A *No.*

126 Should we take the fact that a vendor can be terminated after the pilot phase into consideration when we do our pricing?

A *Yes.*

127 Is an image considered one side of one page?

A *Yes.*

128 Regarding the performance bond for the bid, does it or a copy need to be submitted with the RFP (sic)? It would appear only on award should the performance bond be required ... Please comment and provide clarity as to what is required for RFP and if I am successful bidder ...

A *Please see Section 2.4 which specifies that a sample be submitted as part of your response. Only the successful bidder need actually purchase such a bond.*

Note change in RFP-specified number of indexes:

Note that we are adding an additional blank index field of ten characters which we will call a "Virtual Staple." Other than providing this unpopulated index field as one of the indices, we have no additional requirements of the bidder. The bidder is responsible for ensuring that this additional requirement is reflected in their technical and cost proposals.